

WINTERING WARBLERS IN CAMERON COUNTY, TEXAS,
DURING THE SEASON OF 1934-1935

BY L. IRBY DAVIS

In my report on the wintering of the Black-throated Green Warbler (*Dendroica virens*) and the Wilson Warbler (*Wilsonia pusilla*) in Cameron County, Texas, during the season of 1933-1934 (WILSON BULLETIN, December, 1934), I indicated that I considered it likely a temporary condition with which we were dealing. This winter I have had cause to wonder if there is taking place a general and permanent northward extension of the winter range of warblers. It must be admitted, however, that we again had a mild winter and what is more important a large insect crop. The summer rains were not heavy this time but there was such an enormous crop of insects the previous year that we naturally got a lag effect. Caterpillars were even more numerous, in fact, than during the wet fall.

In order not to miss the incoming winter residents as I did in the fall of 1933, I went at least once a week to the southwestern corner of the county from the latter part of August until the last of December, 1934. This season the Black-throated Green Warblers and the Wilson Warblers which remained as permanent winter residents seemed to arrive the latter part of November. There were early waves of migrants but after a short stop they would go on. At any rate they would be plentiful one day and a week later I could find none at all. From the last week in November until April, 1935, there was no apparent change in the concentration of these two species.

This year the total number of Black-throated Green Warblers wintering in the county seemed to be about the same as last season but there was a further extension of their range to the north. They were observed during December, 1934, and January, 1935, along the Aroyo Colorado east of Harlingen and north along the banks of that stream as far as Willacy County. They were also found north of the Aroyo Colorado in suitable habitats near Harlingen and about the City Lake within the corporate limits of that city.

I was asked some questions by bird students who read my report on the birds here last year in regard to the chances of these birds being golden-cheeked Warblers (*Dendroica chrysoparia*). I might say that the birds wintering here have the typical auricular patch of *virens* and that the belly shows a distinct yellow wash.

This season the Wilson Warbler was found much farther to the east (as far as the eastward limit of the Black-throated Green Warbler the previous year) and slightly north of the Resaca del Rancho Viejo

in the western part of the county. As in the previous season they were at all times relatively scarce and seldom could more than two or three be encountered on an all-day field trip. Sometimes one could stay out all day without seeing a single one.

The rarest winter resident this year was the Yellow Warbler (*Dendroica aestiva*). As far as I know it has never before been known to winter in the United States. Two birds tentatively identified as of this species were seen near the City Lake in Harlingen during the last week of December, 1934. However, they could not be approached near enough for positive identification and it was not until January 20, 1935, that I was absolutely certain this species was also wintering here. On that date I was driving slowly past the courthouse in Brownsville when I heard a "pitting" in a tepaguaje tree on the lawn. I stopped quickly and got out of the car to investigate. As soon as I observed its bright yellow color I called to my wife and Mrs. Anita Miller, a visiting bird student from Cincinnati, to come and see it. Although the tree was rather small we were able to approach it without frightening the bird in the least. Hence we were able to study the bird from as close quarters as our binoculars would permit. It was a male in full plumage and the reddish-chestnut lines on the breast and sides showed up as plainly as though the specimen were in hand. Later in the month others were reported from the vicinity of Brownsville. My first record for the Yellow Warbler for the fall of 1934 was on August 12. By the 19th they had become quite plentiful, and on that date I observed large flocks of them devouring leaf worms on the cotton plants near Santa Maria. They were present in large numbers all during September, but rapidly thinned out the first week in October and one recorded on the 7th was the last seen until the very few winter specimens were located. I did not visit the Brownsville section during November or December; hence, can not report on their concentration there during the first part of the winter.

The Pine Warbler (*Dendroica pinus*) was present in still larger numbers this winter and was observed over all that part of the country which has a suitable growth of trees. This species was also found in Willacy County which is just north of Cameron.

Other warblers wintering here in about their usual concentration and of general distribution were (in order of their importance in number): Myrtle Warbler (*Dendroica coronata*), Western and Northern Yellow-throats (*Geothlypis trichas*), Orange-crowned Warbler (*Vermivora celata*), Black and White Warbler (*Mniotilta varia*), Sycamore Warbler (*Dendroica dominica*), Audubon Warbler (*Den-*

droica auduboni), Nashville Warbler (*Vermivora ruficapilla*), and the Tennessee Warbler (*Vermivora peregrina*).

It might be of interest to note that our summer resident warblers returned long before there was any indication that the winter residents were considering leaving. (The Myrtle Warbler is an exception to this statement as they were becoming noticeably scarce by the first of March and not one could be found on the 24th of that month. The Pine Warblers also left early and a few at a time). The Sennett Warbler (*Compsothlypis nigrilora*) was heard singing on all sides in the southwestern part of the county on March 6, but there was no attempt at song by any of the winter residents. The Orange-crowned Warbler was the first of the winter group to sing. They were first heard on March 29.

Instead of gradually thinning out as the Myrtle Warblers did the Black-throated Green Warblers left all at once as they did in the spring of 1934. The time of leaving was again the second week of April—not a one could be found on the 14th.

HARLINGEN, TEXAS.

AN EXAMPLE OF PARTIAL ALBINISM IN THE EASTERN CROW

BY DAYTON STONER

The unusual arrangement and extent of the white areas in the plumage of an Eastern Crow (*Corvus b. brachyrhynchus* Brehm) recently received by the Zoology Section of the New York State Museum prompts the present contribution.

On December 9, 1933, the writer received a telephone message from Mr. J. Hofman who lives in the west section of the city of Albany, New York, inquiring whether "partly white" crows were rare. He stated that he had such a bird in captivity and asked whether the Museum would be interested in obtaining it. On being assured that the specimen would make a welcome addition to our collection Mr. Hofman sent his son to get the bird but the boy found that the crow had died some time within the preceding twenty-four hours.

This crow was captured alive on November 26, 1933. From that date until the time of its death it had been kept in captivity during which period it fed and appeared to thrive. Upon examination of the specimen in the laboratory, it was found to be in a considerably emaciated state although its stomach was well filled. However, the condition of the plumage was very good and it exhibited few signs of wear or results of abrasion.